



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Communications

May 16, 2012

To: Ways & Means/Budget Committee

Referral to:

Subject: Agreement with Municipal Building Commission

Recommendation: That the Minneapolis City Council authorizes the entering into and the execution by the proper City officials of an agreement with the Municipal Building Commission for its assistance on a project to upgrade City Hall to allow for live broadcasts at designated locations in the building.

Previous directives: None

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Approved by: Sara Dietrich, Communications Director, X2101
Presenters in Committee: Bridgette Bornstein, Deputy Communications Director

Financial Impact

Grant funded 100% by a Homeland Security and Emergency Management Urban Security Initiative grant, secured by Emergency Management. These grant dollars were accepted by the City Council in March 2011. The entire grant amount was 1,487,377, with a small portion (\$214,645.60) designated for the City Hall Live project.

Community Impact

- City Goals – A Safe Place to Call Home
- City Goals – A City That Works
 - Transparency, accountability and fairness are our hallmarks
 - 21st century government: collaborative, efficient and reform-minded
 - Shared democracy empowers residents as valued partners

Background/Supporting Information

In times of emergency, the City of Minneapolis needs to communicate to the public as quickly and efficiently as is possible. Unlike many other government headquarters, City Hall is not fitted with the proper audio-video cabling to allow for live feeds from the building. In addition, it is nearly impossible for news outlets to park live and satellite trucks near City Hall to broadcast live since the Hiawatha Light Rail construction removed parking along 5th Street.

The City's Emergency Management office has identified and secured grant funding to upgrade Minneapolis City Hall to allow live broadcasts from several locations in the building. This would be accomplished by installing a cabling system in the building. The Minneapolis City Council authorized the acceptance of grant funds in 2011 to pay for this project.

When completed, this upgrade to City Hall's infrastructure will allow local and national broadcast outlets to transmit from City Hall without the need to park mobile live units outside the building.

In order to proceed with this project, the City of Minneapolis must enter into an agreement with the Municipal Building Commission to lay out the roles and responsibilities of each entity for completion of this project.

The agreement places joint responsibility on the City and the Municipal Building Commission for incorporating and coordinating the project requirements, including environmental and historical review. The City's Communications Department will work with the City's Property Services Division and the Municipal Building Commission throughout the installation.

Similar technology is already in place in the Hennepin County Government Center, where media can broadcast from inside the building by plugging into a box outside on the Hennepin County plaza. The City Hall Live project is being done with cooperation from Hennepin County and will share the already established parking for broadcast vehicles on the eastern edge of the Hennepin County plaza.

The agreement was developed by a staff team that includes employees from the Communications, Finance and Property Services, City Attorney, Emergency Management Departments plus the MBC. Funding for the project is from a 2010 FEMA Urban Areas Security Initiative grant allocation, which funds equipment used for, but not limited to: Hardware and Software, Live Broadcasting Cabling, generators and mobile video conferencing.

The staff team will develop procedures for use of this new equipment. The access to the equipment within the building will follow the protocols for building access that are already in place, unless the staff team determines that other protocols are required.